

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3664

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC
RAILROAD COMPANY
AND
THE NEW YORK, CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS
RAILROAD COMPANY

IN RE ACCIDENT

AT FULLAN JCT., CHICAGO, ILL., ON

NOVEMBER 15, 1955

SUMMARY

Date: November 15, 1955

Railroads: Chicago, Rock Island : New York, Chicago
and Pacific and St. Louis

Location: Pullman Jct., Chicago, Ill.

Kind of Accident: Side collision

Trains involved: Transfer train : Passenger

Train numbers: Extra 762 West : 6

Locomotive numbers: Diesel-electric unit : Diesel-electric
762 units 181 and 187

Consists: 34 cars, caboose : 15 cars

Estimated speeds: 4 m. p. h. 10 m. p. h.

Operation: Operating rules : Timetable and
train orders

Tracks: Four; tangent; 0.48 : Double; tangent,
percent ascending 0.20 percent
grade westward ascending grade
eastward

Weather: Light rain

Time: 11:50 p. m.

Casualties: 15 injured

Cause: Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific train
making a reverse movement and fouling
a railroad crossing at grade without
proper signal

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3664

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 6, 1910.

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY
AND
THE NEW YORK, CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS RAILROAD COMPANY

DECEMBER 30, 1955

Accident at Pullman Jct., Chicago, Ill., on November 15, 1955,
caused by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific train
making a reverse movement and fouling a railroad cross-
ing at grade without proper signal.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

CLARKE, Commissioner.

On November 15, 1955, there was a side collision between a freight train on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad and a passenger train on the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad at Pullman Jct., Chicago, Ill., which resulted in the injury of 13 passengers and 2 Pullman Company employees.

¹
Under authority of section 17 (2) of the Interstate Commerce Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the Commission to Commissioner Clarke for consideration and disposition.

N.Y.C. & St. L.

- 110th Street,
Chicago, Ill.
2.3 mi.
- ✕ 94th St.
(Point of accident)
2.5 mi.
- JN Tower
Chicago, Ill.

N.Y.C. & St. L.

Eastward main track
Westward main track

C.R.I. & P.

- B.R.C.
C. & W.I.
- Westward main track
- Eastward main track
- Westward running track
- Eastward running track

To Brainerd Jct.,
Chicago, Ill.

Gate

Point of
accident

To Rock Island Jct.,
Chicago, Ill.

C.R.I. & P.

- Rock Island Jct.,
Chicago, Ill.
0.2 mi.
- South Chicago
1.9 mi.
- ✕ Pullman Jct.,
(Point of accident)
3.8 mi.
- Brainerd Jct.,
Chicago, Ill.

West
Wye
Extra 762 West

1,830
ft.

P.T.

P.C.
P.S.

Tangent

687
ft.

Tangent

P.C.

5°
142
ft.

P.T.

551
ft.

P.C.

To JN Tower,
Chicago, Ill.

Stop sign

2°
363
ft.

434
ft.

Stop sign

147
ft.

P.T.

154
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

108
ft.

P.C.

Report No. 3664

Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad
and

New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad
Pullman Jct., Chicago, Ill.

November 15, 1955

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred at the intersection of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad and the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad at Pullman Jct., Chicago, Ill. This location is designated as Pullman Jct. by the C.R.I. & P., and as 94th Street by the N.Y.C. & St.L. The designation Pullman Jct. is used in this report. The crossing is located on that part of the Chicago Division of the C.R.I. & P. extending between Rock Island Jct. and Brainard Jct., 5.9 miles, and on that part of the Chicago Division of the N.Y.C. & St.L. extending between JN Tower and 110th Street, 4.8 miles. Pullman Jct. is 2.1 miles west of Rock Island Jct. and 2.5 miles east of JN Tower. In the vicinity of the point of accident the C.R.I. & P. is a four-track line. From south to north these tracks are designated as eastward running track, westward running track, eastward main track, and westward main track. Movements over the running tracks are made at restricted speed. West of the N.Y.C. & St.L. crossing a facing-point crossover connects the two running tracks. A short distance west of this crossover a second crossover connects the eastward running track with a track south of the running tracks which is designated as the west wye track. The latter crossover is facing-point for west-bound movements on the eastward running track. The west switch is 687 feet west of the crossing. In the vicinity of the point of accident an east-bound N.Y.C. & St.L. train by timetable direction moves toward the southeast by compass direction, and the N.Y.C. & St.L. tracks intersect the C.R.I. & P. tracks at an angle of $67^{\circ}10'$. In this vicinity the N.Y.C. & St.L. is a double-track line, over which trains moving with the current of traffic are operated by timetable and train orders. Between an end-of-automatic-block sign 915 feet west of the crossing and a begin-automatic-block sign 950 feet east of the crossing there is no block system in use. The accident occurred at the intersection of the westward running track of the C.R.I. & P. and the eastward main track of the N.Y.C. & St.L. The running tracks of the C.R.I. & P. are tangent throughout a considerable distance on each side of the crossing. Westward on the west wye track from the crossover switch there is an $8^{\circ}30'$ curve to the left 1,040 feet in length. Throughout a distance of 1,300 feet immediately west of the crossing via the crossovers and the west wye track the grade varies between level and 0.91 percent ascending westward, and it averages 0.39 percent ascending. From the west on the N.Y.C. & St.L. there are, in succession, a 5° curve to the right 142 feet in length, a tangent 551 feet, a 2° curve to the left 363 feet, and a tangent

154 feet to the crossing and 108 feet eastward. The grade is 0.20 percent descending eastward at the point of accident.

Movements over the crossing of the C.R.I. & P. running tracks and the N.Y.C. & St.L. tracks are governed by a crossing gate mounted on a mast in the southwest angle of the intersection. This gate is constructed with a horizontal white arm approximately 25 feet in length and 6 feet above the level of the tops of the rails and is so located that the arm can be swung over both tracks of either railroad. When the gate is in either position, a red banner and a red lantern are displayed above the center of each track. A red light on the mast is displayed in each direction at right angles to the gate, and a yellow light is displayed parallel to the gate. The gate is swung over the N.Y.C. & St.L. tracks to permit C.R.I. & P. movements over the crossing, and is swung over the C.R.I. & P. tracks to permit N.Y.C. & St.L. movements.

Stop signs governing west-bound movements on the C.R.I. & P. and east-bound movements on the N.Y.C. & St.L. are located, respectively, 147 feet east and 434 feet west of the crossing.

In the immediate vicinity of the point of accident a line of the Belt Railway Company of Chicago crosses the line of the N.Y.C. & St.L., and a line of the Chicago and Western Indiana Railroad crosses both the C.R.I. & P. and the N.Y.C. & St.L. Movements over each of these crossings are governed either by a crossing gate or by a tilting-target crossing signal.

Operating rules of the C.R.I. & P. read in part as follows:

98. * * *

Where railroad crossings or junctions are protected by gates, if the gate is against the route to be used, trains or engines on that track must stop and remain at least 50 feet from fouling the crossing or junction until the gate is changed to stop position on the conflicting route.

* * *

Trains moving on the running tracks of the C.R.I. & P. are required to proceed prepared to stop short of a train or an obstruction. The maximum authorized speed for passenger trains on the N.Y.C. & St.L. in the vicinity of the point of accident is 55 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 762 West, a west-bound C.R.I. & P. transfer train, consisted of Diesel-electric unit 762, a caboose, and 34 cars, in the order named. This train originated in a yard at South

Chicago, 1.9 miles east of Pullman Jct., and entered the westward running track between South Chicago and Pullman Jct. It stopped at the stop sign east of the N.Y.C. & St.L. crossing at Pullman Jct., and after the crossing gates were properly lined it proceeded westward. It moved over the crossing, through the crossovers, and onto the west wye track, and stopped a second time with the rear car between 60 and 90 feet west of the crossing. About 10 minutes later, after the crossing gate had been lined for the movement of N.Y.C. & St. L. No. 6, Extra 762 West moved eastward, passed the crossing gate, and struck the side of No. 6.

No. 6, an east-bound first-class N.Y.C. & St.L. passenger train, consisted of Diesel-electric units 181 and 187, coupled in multiple-unit control, one mail-express car, two baggage cars, two coaches, five sleeping cars, one buffet-lounge-sleeping car, and four sleeping cars, in the order named. The fourth, fifth, and sixth, and the ninth to the twelfth cars, inclusive, were of lightweight construction. The other cars were of conventional all-steel construction. This train departed from Chicago, 8.8 miles west of JN Tower and the last reporting station, at 11:20 p.m., on time, and stopped at the stop sign west of the C.R.I. & P. crossing at Pullman Jct. It then proceeded eastward, passing the crossing gate, which was properly lined for the movement, and while it was moving over the crossing at a speed of about 10 miles per hour the ninth car was struck by Extra 762 West.

The rear car in the train of Extra 762 West was overturned and considerably damaged. The rear truck of the ninth car and the front truck of the eleventh car of No. 6 were derailed to the left. There were no separations between the units of the train. The train stopped with the thirteenth car on the crossing. The south sides of the ninth to the thirteenth cars, inclusive, were considerably damaged.

A light rain was falling at the time of the accident, which occurred about 11:50 P.M.

Discussion

As Extra 762 West moved over the N.Y.C. & St.L. crossing at Pullman Jct. the enginemen and the yard conductor were in the control compartment of the locomotive. The two yard brakemen were in the caboose, which was directly behind the locomotive. There was no member of the crew at the rear end of the train. The locomotive was headed eastward and moving in backward motion. Rain had been falling intermittently during

the evening, and the engineer said he experienced considerable difficulty because of the locomotive wheels slipping. When the locomotive reached a point about 1,300 feet west of the crossing the train stalled on the ascending grade. The engineer said he was under the impression that there were 41 cars in the train, and when the train stopped he thought that the rear end extended eastward beyond the crossing. From his location he could not see the rear end of the train or the position of the crossing gate at the crossing. After making an unsuccessful attempt to start the train the engineer applied the brakes, the yard conductor detached the locomotive, and the locomotive was moved westward a distance of about 900 feet in order to sand the rails. The locomotive was then re-coupled to the train. The engineer released the brakes and then found that he still was unable to start the train. He informed the yard conductor that it would be necessary to back the train into the yard at South Chicago, and the conductor alighted and started eastward to protect the movement. After the conductor alighted the fireman observed that the train was starting to move eastward on the descending grade. He called a warning to the engineer, and the engineer immediately made a service application of the brakes. Several seconds later the brakes became applied in emergency as a result of the collision. The enginemen thought that the train had moved not more than 30 to 45 feet when the collision occurred. The yard conductor said that when he reached a point a short distance east of the locomotive he observed that the train was moving eastward. He said that the brakes became applied several seconds after he saw that the cars were moving. The employees in the caboose were not aware that the train was in motion before the brakes became applied.

As No. 6 was approaching the point where the accident occurred the enginemen were in the control compartment at the front of the locomotive. The members of the train crew were in the cars of the train. The enginemen said that as they approached the crossing they observed the rear end of Extra 762 West standing west of the crossing. They estimated that the rear of the train was from 90 to 120 feet west of the crossing, and they said that the train was not moving at the time they saw it. Until the collision occurred, they were unaware that Extra 762 West was moving eastward. According to the tape of the speed-recording device, the speed of the train was not more than 10 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

The switchtender who operates the gate at the crossing said that when Extra 762 West stopped after moving over the crossing the rear end of the train was between 60 and 90 feet west of the crossing. Soon after this train stopped he saw No. 6 approaching, and he lifted the crossing gate for the movement of that train. He was on the opposite side of the tracks from Extra 762 West as No. 6 was passing, and until the collision occurred he was not aware that Extra 762 West was moving eastward.

An operator located in a building near the N.Y.C. & St.L. tracks and 237 feet east of the crossing said that he saw Extra 762 West move over the crossing. After No. 6 stopped at the stop sign west of the crossing, this operator stepped outside to deliver train orders to the crew. He said that at this time he could see the rear end of Extra 762 West, and he thought that the rear car was from 60 to 90 feet west of the crossing. He did not watch this train as No. 6 was passing, and he did not see the train move before the collision occurred. Another operator was located in a building south of the C.R.I. & P. tracks and about 200 feet west of the crossing. He said that Extra 762 West stopped at 11.40 p.m. At this time the cars near the rear of the train were opposite his office, but he did not notice the location of the rear car. He said that approximately 10 minutes after the train stopped the cars began to move slowly eastward. He estimated that the train had moved a distance of from 60 to 90 feet and was moving at a speed of about 4 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

Cause

This accident was caused by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific train making a reverse movement and fouling a railroad crossing at grade without proper signal.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this thirtieth day of December, 1955.

By the Commission, Commissioner Clarke.

(SEAL)

HAROLD D. McCOY,
Secretary.